

singles play, which comprises:

(a) a base having a bottom for engaging the ground;
(b) a staff slidably connected to the base such that the base and staff can be pulled apart or pushed together between collapsed and extended positions thereof by sliding the base and staff relative to one another;

(c) a fixed depth notch on top of the staff with the notch having an upwardly facing bottom, wherein a top support cord or cable of a tennis net can be placed within the notch and when so placed the top support cord or cable rests against and is retained against vertical movement by the bottom of the notch;

E ((d) a lock which releasably secures the base and staff against sliding movement relative to one another when the lock is engaged, wherein the lock is configured to hold the base and staff in a single, predetermined, extended and locked position; and

(e) wherein the combined length of the base and staff in the single, predetermined, extended and locked position of the base and staff is selected to hold the top edge of the tennis net above the ground by an amount required to conform the tennis net for regulation singles play when the singles stick is installed at a predetermined court location between a singles line and doubles line on one side of a tennis court, wherein a user can quickly and easily conform one side of the tennis net for regulation singles play without measurement by pulling the base and staff of the singles stick apart, by locking the base and staff of the singles stick together in the single, predetermined, extended and locked position that is provided therefor, and by then wedging the singles stick between the top support cord or cable and the ground at the predetermined court location, the singles stick when so wedged having the top cord or

cable of the tennis net resting against the bottom of the notch on the staff with the bottom of the base resting against the ground.

28. (New) The singles stick of claim 27, wherein the base and staff are telescopically connected to one another.

29. (New) The singles stick of claim 28, wherein the base and staff have mating non-circular cross-sectional configurations.

30. (New) The singles stick of claim 27, wherein the bottom of the base comprises an enlarged foot for abutting against the ground.

31. (New) The singles stick of claim 27, wherein the lock is further configured to hold the base and staff in a single, predetermined, collapsed and locked position.

32. (New) The singles stick of claim 27, wherein the lock comprises a locking pin insertable in a hole when the lock is engaged.

33. (New) The singles stick of claim 32, wherein the pin is spring biased in a direction tending to insert the pin in the hole when the pin is aligned with the hole.

34. (New) The singles stick of claim 27, wherein the lock is biased towards automatic engagement of the lock.

Remarks

The Office Action of June 26, 2002 has been carefully reviewed by the undersigned attorney. In order to conclude